



Semantic Feature Analysis for
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire
By J.K. Rowling



Purpose:

Semantic Feature Analysis is a strategy taken from the “theoretical construct of cognitive structure” created by Frank Smith in 1975. It is a vocabulary strategy that helps students analyze and create mental categories for different objects, characters or ideas in order to discover characteristics, similarities, and relationships. This strategy would be used after the students have read a substantial portion of (but not finished) the novel. They need to know enough about each character in order to analyze their characteristics, yet there should still be time and text left for expansion and additions.

Rationale:

This strategy links new words and concepts to previous knowledge and shows interrelationships between words, concepts, characters and ideas. This information is recorded on a grid that can be continually expanded and added to as students read further and learn more about the novel.

Activity Time:

This activity will take anywhere from 15 to twenty minutes, depending upon the depth of discussion and the number of features analyzed.

Directions:

Step 1-

Using an overhead copy of the blank semantic chart, have the class list characters from *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. Include characters such as Harry, Hermione, Ron, Dumbledore, Malfoy, Hagrid, and so forth. See the example chart for more.

Step 2-

Discuss and define the word “features.” As a class (and with teacher modeling), brainstorm some features to be included. These features may be physical as well as behavioral. List these features on a piece of chart paper and include as many as possible.

Step 3-

Select which features to focus upon. Write these across the top of the chart. Choose a wide range of features that are significant and will increase student’s word knowledge and understanding.

Step 4-

Use a Y or an N to indicate which character possesses a certain feature. A ? may be used if possession is unknown or disputed. See example chart for an illustration.

Step 5-

Have students fill in their own semantic feature analysis charts. They may choose which features to include from the list generated by the class, or they may think of their

own. Students are encouraged to continue to add both characters and features to this chart as they continue throughout the book. Students should indicate the feature possession of each character, as was modeled by the teacher.

Step 6-

Have a class discussion centering around the features. Discuss similarities, differences, and relationships as you try to get students to make connections between and really analyze the characters. Students may use this chart further as a writing prompt for a character analysis or comparison and contrast paper.

Assessment:

Students will be formally assessed upon their semantic feature analysis chart. Further assessment could occur if students write an analysis or comparison/contrast paper. Informal assessment will also be conducted throughout the lesson as the teacher monitors comments, participation, and interaction.

